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ninemilecreek.org

MEMO

TO: Nine Mile Creek Board of Managers
FROM: Randy Anhorn
DATE: April 29, 2021
RE: Wetland Protection/Restoration Plan RFP

Background/Information

To help staff and Barr engineering develop an RFP for wetland protection and restoration plans for identified high-quality wetlands, at the Board's April 1, 2021 workshop, the managers discussed wetland goals and priorities for restorations.

What we heard from those discussions:

For wetland protection projects, the Board identified the following preferences:

- Prefer one-time, "permanent" projects, versus projects requiring sustained management
- Prefer partnership projects with a small number of property owners (to minimize complexity), preferably public entities
- Would like to have more information on potential projects, including cost, scope, and how well the projects align with preferred criteria

For other wetland protection activities, the Board identified the following ideas:

- Invasive species- prefer that these efforts be led by engaged public or land-owners. However, NMCWD not entirely opposed to including some invasive species management as part of wetland protection projects.
- Development and implementation of an education program and/or assistance with public engagement/organization to promote wetland-specific awareness and action (e.g. assistance in formation wetland associations/groups, assisting with communication)
- Communication with stakeholders around NMCWD's willingness to contribute to wetland protection/enhancement opportunities as they arise.
- Ongoing (annual?) field check-in on high priority wetlands (to identify and/or monitor changes)
- Engage MN Water Stewards to assist with wetland protection activities
- Continued discussion on methods to protect from threats to high quality wetlands, including impacts or loss from further development (including avoiding variances)

RFP Objective: provide NMCWD with planning-level information and prioritization for potential wetland protection projects

Based on discussions at the workshop a draft of main tasks that we will include as part of the RFP are:

Primary RFP tasks:

1. High-level feasibility analysis of potential stormwater treatment retrofit or other infrastructure-related projects, including:
 - Review of existing grading, potential utility conflicts, landowners
 - Preparation of planning-level cost
2. For invasive species management, high-level project scoping, including:
 - Extent of potential project
 - Identification of landowners
 - Planning-level cost
3. Project prioritization, including:
 - Assessment of how projects meet the following prioritization criteria:
 - Project partners
 - Public vs private (*preference for public*)
 - Number of potential project partners (*preference for lower number of participants to reduce project complexity*)
 - Permanent projects versus sustained management (*preference for permanent projects*)
 - Cost
 - Cost/benefit (this will be qualitative, versus quantitative)
 - Level of time investment by NMCWD staff
 - Achievement of co-benefits
 - Educational opportunities
 - Citizen engagement
4. Reporting

Board Request

Presented to ensure staff is including the correct tasks to be incorporated in the proposed RFP. The resulting RFP will be brought back to the Board at its May 19, 2021 regular Board meeting for authorization to send to the District's engineering pool and post.